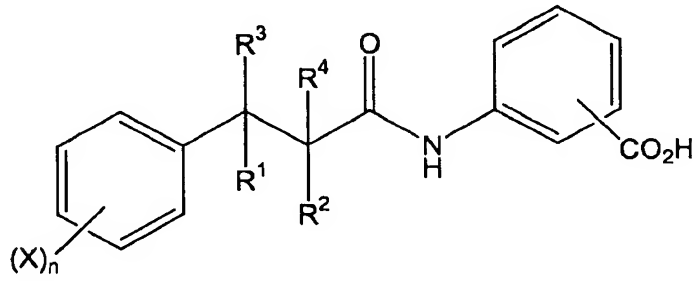
CLAIMS:

1. A method of downregulating microglial cell functional activity, said method comprising contacting said cell with an effective amount of a compound of formula (I) or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof:



(I)

wherein each of R^1 and R^2 is independently selected from a hydogen atom or a C_1-C_4alkyl group, R^3 and R^4 are each hydrogen atoms or together form another chemical bond, each X is independently selected from a hydroxyl group, a halogen atom, a C_1-C_4alkyl group or a C_1-C_4alkoxy group, or when two X groups are alkyl or alkoxy groups, they may be connected together to form a ring, and n is an integer from 1 to 3, for a time and under conditions sufficient to inhibit, retard or otherwise downregulate iNOS expression.

2. The method according to claim 1 wherein said microglial cell functional activity is nitric oxide synthesis.

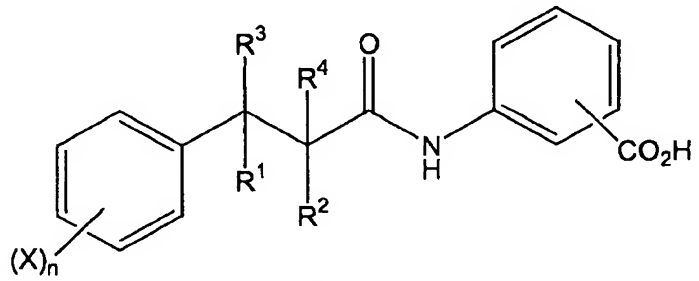
3. The method according to claim 2 wherein said nitric oxide synthesis is inflammatory cytokine induced nitric oxide synthesis.

4. The method according to claim 3 wherein said cytokine is interferon-γ.

5. The method according to claim 2 wherein said nitric oxide synthesis is

lipopolysaccharide-induced nitric oxide synthesis.

6. A method of downregulating microglial cell functional activity in a mammal, said method comprising administering to said mammal an effective amount of a compound of formula (I) or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof:



(I)

wherein each of R^1 and R^2 is independently selected from a hydrogen atom or a C_1-C_4alkyl group, R^3 and R^4 are each hydrogen atoms or together form another chemical bond, each X is independently selected from a hydroxyl group, a halogen atom, a C_1-C_4alkyl group or a C_1-C_4alkoxy group, or when two X groups are alkyl or alkoxy groups, they may be connected together to form a ring, and n is an integer from 1 to 3, for a time and under conditions sufficient to inhibit, retard or otherwise downregulate iNOS expression.

7. The method according to claim 6 wherein said microglial cell functional activity is nitric oxide synthesis.

8. The method according to claim 7 wherein said nitric oxide synthesis is inflammatory cytokine induced nitric oxide synthesis.

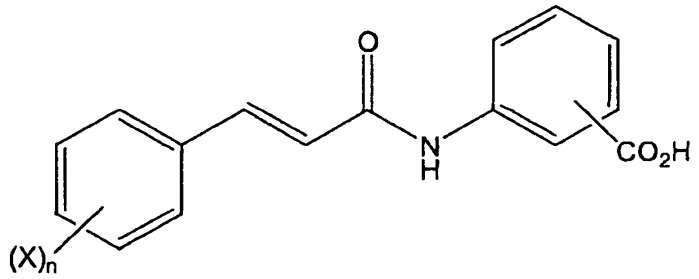
9. The method according to claim 8 wherein said cytokine is interferon-γ.

10. The method according to claim 7 wherein said nitric oxide synthesis is lipopolysaccharide-induced nitric oxide synthesis.

11. The method according to any one of claims 1-10 wherein the carboxyl group is in the 2-, 3- or 4-position of the aromatic ring, at least one of R^1 and R^2 is a hydrogen atom, R^3 and R^4 taken together form a chemical bond and n is 1 or 2 and each X, which may be the same or different, is selected from halogen, C_1-C_4 alkyl or C_1-C_4alkoxy.

12. The method of claim 11 wherein the carboxyl group is in the 2-position, both of R^1 and R^2 are hydrogen atoms and X is selected from halogen and C_1-C_4alkoxy and n is 2 and both X are selected from C_1-C4alkoxy.

13. The method according to claim 12 wherein said compound is of the formula:



(II)

14. The method of claim 13 wherein said compound is selected from the list:

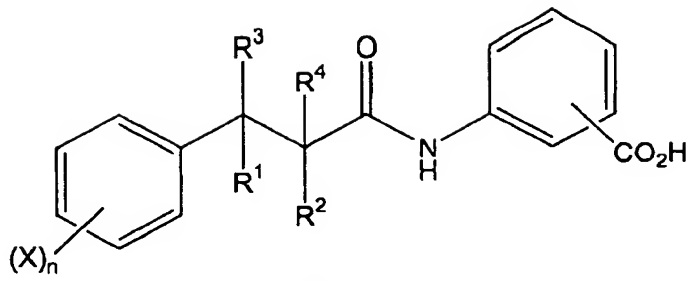
2-[[3-(2-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-ethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-ethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-ethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-propylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-propylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(4-propylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-fluorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-fluorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-fluorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-bromophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-bromophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-bromophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-dimethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-dimethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,4-dimethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-dimethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-dimethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,4-dimethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-diethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-diethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,4-diethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-dipropoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-dipropoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,4-dipropoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-diethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-diethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,4-diethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-dipropylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-dipropylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,4-dipropylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-prop nyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-methoxy-4-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-4-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-methoxy-4-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-4-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-methoxy-4-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-4-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-trimethylenephenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-trimethylenephenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-methylenedioxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid; and
2-[[3-(3,4-ethylenedioxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid.

15. The method according to claim 14 wherein said compound is 2-[[3-(3,4-dimethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid.

16. A method of upregulating microglial cell inhibited functional activity in a mammal, said method comprising administering to said mammal an effective amount of an antagonist of a compound of formula (I) or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof:



(I)

wherein each of R^1 and R^2 is independently selected from a hydrogen atom or a C_1-C_4alkyl group, R^3 and R^4 are each hydrogen atoms or together form another chemical bond, each X is independently selected from a hydroxyl group, a halogen atom, a C_1-C_4alkyl group or a C_1-C_4alkoxy group, or when two X groups are alkyl or alkoxy groups, they may be connected together to form a ring, and n is an integer from 1 to 3, for a time and under conditions sufficient to upregulate iNOS expression.

17. The method according to claim 16 wherein said microglial cell functional activity is nitric oxide synthesis.

18. The method according to claim 17 wherein said nitric oxide synthesis is inflammatory cytokine induced nitric oxide synthesis.

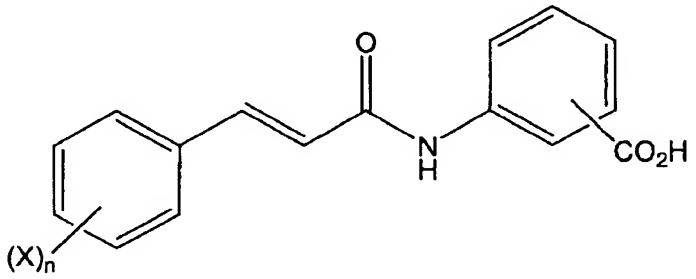
19. The method according to claim 18 wherein said cytokine is interferon-γ.

20. The method according to claim 17 wherein said nitric oxide synthesis is lipopolysaccharide-induced nitric oxide synthesis.

21. The method according to any one of claims 16-20 wherein the carboxyl group is in the 2-, 3- or 4-position of the aromatic ring, at least one of R^1 and R^2 is a hydrogen atom, R^3 and R^4 taken together form a chemical bond and n is 1 or 2 and each X, which may be the same or different, is selected from halogen, C_1-C_4 alkyl or C_1-C_4alkoxy.

22. The method of claim 21 wherein the carboxyl group is in the 2-position, both of R^1 and R^2 are hydrogen atoms and X is selected from halogen and C_1-C_4alkoxy and n is 2 and both X are selected from C_1-C4alkoxy.

23. The method according to claim 22 wherein said compound is of the formula:



(II)

24. The method of claim 23 wherein said compound is selected from the list:

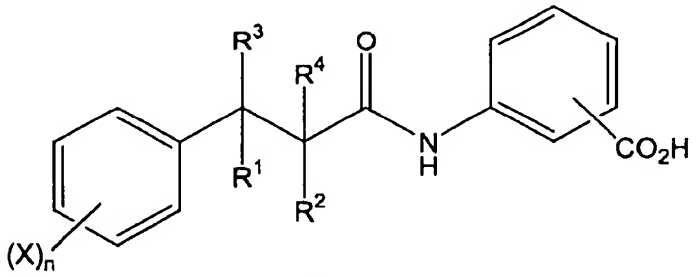
2-[[3-(2-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-ethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-ethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-ethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-propylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-propylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-propylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(3-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-fluorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-fluorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-fluorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-bromophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-bromophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-bromophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-dimethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-dimethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,4-dimethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-dimethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-dimethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,4-dimethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-diethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-diethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,4-diethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-dipropoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-dipropoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,4-dipropoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-diethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-diethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,4-diethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-dipropylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-dipropylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,4-dipropylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-methoxy-4-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-4-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(3-methoxy-4-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-4-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-methoxy-4-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-4-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-trimethylenephenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-trimethylenephenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-methylenedioxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid; and
2-[[3-(3,4-ethylenedioxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid.

25. The method according to claim 24 wherein said compound is 2-[[3-(3,4-dimethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid.

26. A method for the treatment and/or prophylaxis of a condition characterised by aberrant, unwanted or otherwise inappropriate microglial cell functional activity in a mammal, said method comprising administering to said mammal an effective amount of a compound of formula (I) or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof:



(I)

wherein each of R^1 and R^2 is independently selected from a hydrogen atom or a C_1-C_4alkyl group, R^3 and R^4 are each hydrogen atoms or together form another chemical bond, each X is independently selected from a hydroxyl group, a halogen atom, a C_1-C_4alkyl group or a C_1-C_4alkoxy group, or when two X groups are alkyl

or alkoxy groups, they may be connected together to form a ring, and n is an integer from 1 to 3, for a time and under conditions sufficient to downregulate iNOS expression.

27. The method according to claim 26 wherein said microglial cell functional activity is nitric oxide synthesis.

28. The method according to claim 27 wherein said aberrant nitric oxide synthesis is overproduction of nitric oxide.

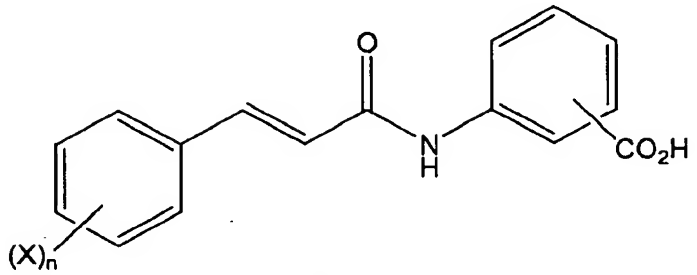
29. The method according to claim 28 wherein said condition is nitric oxide induced neuronal damage.

30. The method according to claim 29 wherein said neuronal damage is brain ischaemia, Parkinson's disease, AIDS dementia, Alzheimer's disease, oligodendrocyte cytotoxicity, demylelination in multiple sclerosis or amyototrophic lateral sclerosis.

31. The method according to any one of claims 26-30 wherein the carboxyl group is in the 2-, 3- or 4-position of the aromatic ring, at least one of R^1 and R^2 is a hydrogen atom, R^3 and R^4 taken together form a chemical bond and n is 1 or 2 and each X, which may be the same or different, is selected from halogen, C_1-C_4 alkyl or C_1-C_4alkoxy.

32. The method of claim 31 wherein the carboxyl group is in the 2-position, both or R^1 and R^2 are hydrogen atoms and X is selected from halogen and C_1-C_4alkoxy and n is 2 and both X are selected from C_1-C4alkoxy.

33. The method according to claim 32 wherein said compound is of the formula:



(II)

34. The method of claim 33 wherein said compound is selected from the list:

2-[[3-(2-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-ethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-ethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-ethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-propylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-propylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-propylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-fluorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-fluorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(4-fluorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2-bromophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(3-bromophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(4-bromophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2,3-dimethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(3,4-dimethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2,4-dimethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2,3-dimethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(3,4-dimethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2,4-dimethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2,3-diethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(3,4-diethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2,4-diethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2,3-dipropoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(3,4-dipropoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2,4-dipropoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2,3-diethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(3,4-diethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2,4-diethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2,3-dipropylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(3,4-dipropylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2,4-dipropylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(3-methoxy-4-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2-methoxy-4-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(3-methoxy-4-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2-methoxy-4-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(3-methoxy-4-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-methoxy-4-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-trimethylenephenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-trimethylenephenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-methylenedioxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid; and
2-[[3-(3,4-ethylenedioxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid.

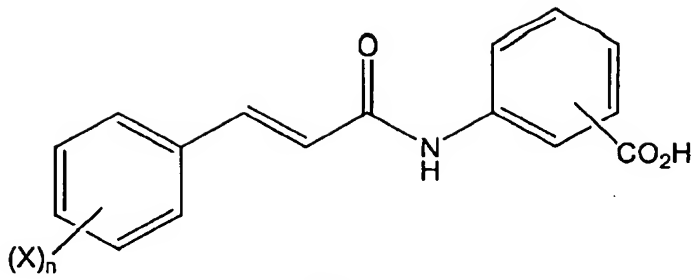
35. The method according to claim 34 wherein said compound is 2-[[3-(3,4-dimethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid.

36. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound of formula (I) or a pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof or antagonist thereof and one or more pharmaceutically acceptable carriers and/or diluents.

37. The composition according to claim 36 wherein the carboxyl group is in the 2-, 3- or 4-position of the aromatic ring, at least one of R^1 and R^2 is a hydrogen atom, R^3 and R^4 taken together form a chemical bond and n is 1 or 2 and each X, which may be the same or different, is selected from halogen, C_1-C_4 alkyl or C_1-C_4alkoxy.

38. The composition according to claim 37 wherein the carboxyl group is in the 2-position, both of R^1 and R^2 are hydrogen atoms and X is selected from halogen and C_1-C_4alkoxy and n is 2 and both X are selected from C_1-C4alkoxy.

39. The composition according to claim 38 wherein said compound is of the formula:



(II)

40. The composition according to claim 39 wherein said compound is selected from the list:

2-[[3-(2-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-ethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-ethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-ethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-propylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-propylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-propylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-fluorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3-fluorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(4-fluorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2-bromophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(3-bromophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(4-bromophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2,3-dimethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(3,4-dimethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2,4-dimethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2,3-dimethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(3,4-dimethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2,4-dimethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2,3-diethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(3,4-diethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2,4-diethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2,3-dipropoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(3,4-dipropoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2,4-dipropoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2,3-diethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(3,4-diethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2,4-diethylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2,3-dipropylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(3,4-dipropylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2,4-dipropylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(3-methoxy-4-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2-methoxy-4-methylphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(3-methoxy-4-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2-methoxy-4-chlorophenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(3-methoxy-4-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2-methoxy-3-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;

2-[[3-(2-methoxy-4-hydroxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-trimethylenephenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(2,3-trimethylenephenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid;
2-[[3-(3,4-methylenedioxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid; and
2-[[3-(3,4-ethylenedioxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid.

41. The composition according to claim 40 wherein said compound is 2-[[3-(3,4-dimethoxyphenyl)-1-oxo-2-propenyl]amino]benzoic acid.

42. The composition according to any one of claims 36-41 when used in the method of any one of claims 1-35.